

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2228

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 4334

EXDIS

FOR AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJ: US-SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS

1. ALTHOUGH I REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED A ROUND WITH ROVIRA AND THUS FULLY INFORMED ON THE SPANISH POSITION, I NONETHELESS THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO RECOUNT A CONVERSATION I HAD LAST EVENING WITH CARRO MARTINEZ WHO IS MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND IS A VERY CLOSE ADVISER TO PRIME MINISTER ARIAS.

2. CARRO MARTINEZ TOLD ME THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM FOR THE GOS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IS THE ASSISTANCE THE US MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE IN THE FORM OF CREDITS, ETC. SO THAT SPANISH ARMED FORCES COULD CARRY OUT THEIR MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. HE DISMISSED AS NOT VERY RELEVANT A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO. FAR MORE IMPORTANT, HE SAID, WAS THAT THE EQUIPMENT OF THE SPANISH ARMED FORCES BE UPDATED, AND THE GOS PREFERRED THAT SOURCE OF SUPPLY BE THE US. CARRO MARTINEZ DID NOT GO INTO FIGURES, BUT STATED CLEARLY THAT IF WE COULD BE RELATIVELY FORTHCOMING IN THIS AREA, THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT ON ITS PART WOULD BE MOST FORTHCOMING WITH REGARD TO FACILITIES.

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3. I TOOK THE OCCASSIOON TO POINT OUT TO CARRO MARTINEZ

THAT WE UNDERSTOOD THE INTEREST OF THE SPANISH ARMED FORCES IN MODERNIZING THEIR EQUIPMENT, BUT THAT REALISTICALLY, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT CONGRESS WAS NOT IN THE MOOD TO APPROVE LARGE SUMS, EVEN IN THE FORM OF FMS CREDITS, IN THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK. I SAID THAT I KNEW THAT THIS GENERAL QUESTION HAD BEEN THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION DURING THE RECENT ROUND.

4. I SHOULD ADD THAT CARRO MARTINEZ WAS VERY PLEASED TO LEARN THAT THE NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE BEGINNING JUNE 30. HE WAS ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL PROPONENTS HERE OF ACCELERATING THE TEMPO OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. COMMENT: I KNOW THAT THE ABOVE IS NOT EXACTLY NEWS TO YOU, BUT I REPORT IT BECAUSE WE SHOULD ALSO BEAR IN MIND THE ROLE WHICH THE SPANISH ARMED FORCES WILL INEVITABLY PLAY IN THE SUCCESSION PHASE. TO THE EXTENT THAT THE ARMED FORCES REMAIN LINKED TO THE US, THIS SHOULD HELP US TO EXERCISE INFLUENCE TO ASSURE AN ORDERLY TRANSITION WITH GREATER EVOLUTION TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. STABLER

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